REMARKS

Applicants note and appreciate the indication that claims 10-12 and 20 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Claims 1-28 remain in the application. Claims 1 and 16 have been amended to better clarify the fluid passageways of the claimed invention. Claim 1 further recites that each passageway permits fluid flow from the first upstream end to the second downstream end. Claim 16 similarly clarifies that the fluid passageways extend substantially between an upstream end and a downstream end to direct fluid flow from the upstream end to the downstream end.

As to the 103 rejections of independent claims 1 and 16, it is presumed that the subject matter of these claims would be obvious over the alleged combination of the irrigation hose of Shibata 3,866,833 and the sprinkling device of Hane 4,162,041. However, the alleged combination is respectfully believed to lack the essential features of these claims for the following reasons.

In Shibata '833, the irrigation hose comprises a supply path 3 and a constant pressure path 4. A perforated diaphragm 2 has plurality of small bores 6 formed along its length and extends between the two paths so as to supply fluid from the supply path 3 to the constant pressure path 4 . An outer wall 1 of the hose on the side of the constant pressure path 4 defines a plurality of sprinkling holes 5.

In contrast to claim 1, Shibata '833 does not define at least two fluid passageways formed within the hose to permit more than one fluid stream therethrough so as to permit fluid flow from the upstream end to the downstream end of the hose. Shibata's constant pressure path 4 defines an extension of the fluid supply path 3. As shown in Figure 1, fluid from the supply

path 3 flows through the plurality of small bores 6 to the constant pressure supply path 4 and then is directed upwards, left or right (see Figure 1) to flow out of the plurality of sprinkling holes 5. The supply path 3 and the constant pressure path 4 do not define first and second passageways which each permit a fluid stream to flow from an upstream end to a downstream end. Rather, Shibata teaches a single fluid pathway which is defined by both paths 3, 4. This is clearly unlike claim 1.

Moreover, Hane '041 suffers from the same deficiencies of Shibata '833, and thus, fails to render amended claim 1 obvious. Hane's socket 4 (as shown in Fig. 5) does not define more than one fluid passageway throughout its length. The sub-pipes 3 are merely an extension of the same fluid stream defined by the main pipe 2. This is because water feeds in the sub-pipes 3 from the main pipe 2 at the socket 5 and then branches either left or right, relative to Fig. 5, into the sub-pipes and consequently flows out of the numerous spurting holes defined in the sub-pipes (col. 7, lines 46-48). Therefore, even the alleged combination of Shibata '833 and Hanes '041 would not render amended claim 1 obvious.

In addition, amended claim 16 would also not be obvious over the alleged combination of Shibata '833 and Hane '041. As discussed above, the constant pressure path 4 of Shibata '833 is an extension of the same fluid stream as the water supply path 3. Shibata '833 does not define a first and second passageways which extend substantially throughout the frame between an upstream end and a downstream end to direct fluid flow from the upstream end to the downstream end. Hane also does not teach or suggest claim 16 because its sub-pipes 3 are fed by the main pipe 2 and thus do not define a second passageway as recited in claim 16.

Finally, as to claim 26, none of the cited references teach or suggest a frame which

includes first and second conduits which define first and second passageways which are fluidly separate from each other throughout the frame, as recited in claim 26. Applicants respectfully disagree that Hane's connection socket 21 in Fig. 7 teaches or suggests the subject matter of claim 26. The connection socket 21 of Fig. 7 merely shows or describes a modification to the connection socket shown in Figs. 3, 5 or 6. This modification merely teaches that the previously described connection sockets of Figs. 3, 5 or 6 can include sub-pipe connection parts 11 on both sides of the main pipe connection part 10 in order to mount sub-pipes 3 on both sides of the main pipe 2. The internal construction of the connection sockets 21 does not deviate from the internal construction previously described in Figs. 3, 5 and 6 (col. 8, lines 55-69) except that there is a second sub-pipe 3. The fluid connection to the second sub-pipe 3 is still part of the passageway of the main pipe 2, together with the previously described first sub-pipe 3, and thus fails to teach or suggest a fluidly separate second passageway in any respect. Claim 26 is also believed to be allowable for this reason.

For the above reasons, it is believed that the cited references are wholly unlike applicants' claimed distribution tube assembly and cannot anticipate or render it obvious.

Claims 1-28 are now respectfully believed to be distinguishable over the cited references. Reconsideration and allowance of these claims is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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